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July 18, 2014

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles, CA 90012
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**Support for Motion by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas - Initial Steps to
Support a Comprehensive Diversion Plan for Los Angeles County**

Dear Los Angeles Board of Supervisors:

The members of the Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (LARRP) were greatly encouraged by the presentation made to your Board by District Attorney Lacey on July 15 regarding the need to divert the mentally ill away from the criminal justice system and toward appropriate community-based treatment.

We were encouraged still further when Supervisor Ridley-Thomas followed the DA's presentation with a motion to set aside a minimum of \$20 million to support first steps toward implementation of a diversion plan. Considering the vast amounts it costs to warehouse mentally ill people in jail cells where their condition often deteriorates, the \$20 million represents an extremely sound investment in best practices. Further, this motion calls for addressing the housing and employment needs that when implemented, will keep many people from returning to jail.

We strongly urge your support for the Ridley-Thomas motion, and we commend the supervisor for making a powerful case for its passage. LARRP represents more than 300 service providers and advocacy organizations across the county and we stand ready to assist in implementing this far-reaching motion.

If I can provide any more information, please contact me at
peggyedwards@lareentry.org.

Sincerely,

Peggy Edwards
Executive Director

CC: Jackie Lacey
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